

Nitzavim-Vayailech 5774

BS"D Parashat Nitzavim-Vayailech 5774

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Parashat Nitzavim begins:

וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עֹמְדִים לְפָנָי הַיּוֹם וְכָל־אֲנָשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֹמְדִים לְפָנָי הַיּוֹם (שְׁמ׳)
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⁹ All of you are standing today in the presence of the Lord your God—your leaders and tribal heads, your elders and officials, all Israel, ¹⁰ together with your children and your wives, and the converted living in your camps, from the wood choppers to your water carriers.

¹¹ To enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day, ¹² to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

¹³ I am making this covenant, with its oath, not only with you

*do not turn a deaf ear,
do not stand aloof, O God.*

*See how your enemies growl,
how your foes rear their heads.*

*With cunning they conspire against your people;
they plot against those you cherish.*

*“Come,” they say, “let us destroy them as a nation,
so that Israel’s name is remembered no more.”*

*With one mind they plot together;
they form an alliance against you.*

This will be their intent – to eradicate the name of Israel with a grand coalition.

Asaph enumerates the members of this future coalition:

: אֲדוֹמִים וְיִשְׁמְאֵלִיטִים וְמוֹאָבִים וְחֲגִרִים (א(

: בְּבִלְשָׁן וְאַמּוֹן וְאַמְלֵק וְפִלִּיִשְׁתִּים וְעַמּוּסִים (א(

: אַשּׁוּרִים וְעַמּוּסִים וְעַרְבֵי יָם וְעַרְבֵי שָׂדֵה וְעַרְבֵי נֶגֶד (א(

The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, of Moab and the Hagrites, Byblos, Ammon and Amalek, Philistia, with the people of Tyre. Even Assyria has joined them to reinforce Lot’s descendants.

The Malbim (Meir Laibish ben Yechiel Michal) as well, writes in his commentary on Yechezkel 32,17 regarding a future coalition which will come against the Jewish State (translation):

It will come to pass in the end of days, after the Jewish people will return to the land of Israel, that the nations

will come together in order (with the intent) to capture Yerushalayim.

The prophet names the nations who will come. Gog, the king of Meshech and Tuval from the north and west who are uncircumcised and called "Edom", who are the descendants of Yefet living now in **Europe**.

And Paras, Kush, and the House of Turgama who are all circumcised and adhering to the belief of Yishmael, will join with the children of Edom to attempt to capture the Land of Israel from the Jews.

But when they arrive, they will create chaos among themselves and make war on each other. That is, Edom (Europe) will make war on Yishmael because their beliefs are different.

And there, God will judge them in sword and blood as stated by the prophet Zecharia, chapter 14.

And here the prophet (Yechezkel) relates how they all will be lost; and singles out **Egypt, Ashur (Syria) and Elam (Iran)** who adhere to the religion of Yishmael and are today circumcised. He then mentions Meshech, Tuval and Edom, their kings and princes from the north (Europeans) who are all uncircumcised.

And between them there will be a war. The first to be utterly destroyed will be the **Egyptians**, who are the closest to the

*Land of Israel and will come forward first and fall. Then the Assyrians and **Persians** will come to avenge their ally and they all will be destroyed.*

If the Malbim lived today, I think he would have been more specific, as follows:

It will come to pass in the end of the exile and the Jewish people will return to the land of Israel, that many nations will come together in order to attempt to capture Yerushalayim.

The nations who will come are from the north and west and include the European Union and the nations which comprised the former Soviet Union who are all uncircumcised and called "Edom", the descendants of Yefet living now in Europe and adhering to the Christian faith.

And Iran, the Arab peoples, and the House of Saud who are all circumcised adhering to the faith of Yishmael, will join with the children of Edom to attempt to capture the Land of Israel from the Children of Israel.

But when they arrive, they will create chaos among themselves and make war on each other. That is, the Christians from Europe will make war on the Muslims, because their beliefs are different.

And there, God will judge them in sword and blood as stated by the prophet Zecharia, chapter 14.

And here the prophet (Yechezkel) describes how they will be lost. He singles out Egypt, Syria and Iran who adhere to the religion of Yishmael and are circumcised. Then Meshech, Tuval and Edom, their kings and princes from the north, who are uncircumcised, and between them will be a war.

The first to be utterly destroyed will be the Egyptians, who are the closest to the Land of Israel, who will come forward first and fall; then the Syrians and Iranians will come to avenge their fallen ally and they all will be destroyed.

Asaph ends with the following prayer to HaShem:

Make them like tumbleweed, my God, like chaff before the wind.

As fire consumes the forest or a flame sets the mountains ablaze, so pursue them with your tempest and terrify them with your storm.

Cover their faces with shame, Lord, so that they will seek your name.

May they ever be ashamed and dismayed; may they perish in disgrace.

Let them know that you, whose name is the Lord—that you alone

are the Most High over all the earth.

How can we connect today's apathetic, dispassionate and uncommitted responses to Obama's call for military co-operation with the active, and vigorous responses of the Moslem and European states to unite in a military effort against the Jewish State, as envisioned by the Prophet Yechezkel?

I suggest:

The dire vision of Yechezkel will evolve from the present loose confederation being created by Obama. At some point in time, there will be a sharp transition from their lackluster attitude to combine their Moslem military forces with the Christians of Europe and the US to fight their Moslem brethren, no matter how evil those brothers are, and turn their attention and armies against the Jewish State. It could come about by a covert agreement between the US and the Arab countries that in return for immediate military co-operation the US will ignore the future threats to the Jewish State. Or it could come about through the religious interests of Islam and Christianity who will sense the opportunity to rid themselves of the Jewish State which is a living and breathing testimony that their religions are false.

A Coalition Stronger Than All Our Combined Enemies

At some point in time there **will be** an ominous Islamic-European military coalition against the Jewish State, because there is nothing which was envisioned by our prophets which did not eventually materialize.

The question is, what can we field against these evil men?

The answer is found in the opening of our parasha:

All of you are standing today in the presence of the Lord your God—your leaders and tribal heads, your elders and officials, all Israel, together with your children and your wives, and the converted living in your camps, from the wood choppers to your water carriers.

To enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day, to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I am making this covenant, with its oath, not only with you who are standing here with us today in the presence of the Lord our God, but also with those who are not with us here today.

We in Eretz Yisrael will field a coalition stronger than all our combined enemies.

Ours will be a coalition of Jewish “achdut” comprising those of Am Yisrael living in the Holy Land. Rabbanim and political leaders, our wives and children, our converts from the most modest of people to our most gifted.

It will include the righteous living today with those who passed on to the next world.

It will include the very observant together with those who know nothing of the Torah, with the common denominator being that we are descendants of our fathers Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov living under HaShem’s protective wing in Eretz Yisrael.

We in Eretz Yisrael will field a coalition stronger than all our combined enemies.

However our coalition is conditional on our desire to see the good in every Jew. The talmid chacham must never forget that he is what he is to a great measure because he was born to a family that encouraged Torah study and mitzvot, whereas his neighbor who desecrates the Shabbat was not born to such a family. That while the "learner" was in an air-conditioned bet midrash, the non-Shabbat observer was protecting him with his body.

Modesty, humility, propriety of manner, love of fellow Jew these are the links which form the chain of protection which stands between us and the forces of evil which surrounds us.

"Achdut" (Unity) is predicated on being physically together in Hashem's Holy Land. Without that "togetherness", all the platitudes of love and unity and even financial help cannot forge the integrity of being "one" which is necessary for the sacred coalition of Am Yisrael.

As stated by the illustrious Hillel, the principle of "Love thy fellow Jew as yourself" is the basis of Judaism. For just as a parent wishes that his children live in peace and harmony, so too does our Father-in-Heaven seek the peace and unity of His children – Am Yisrael.

In conclusion let's recall an incident in the life of Elisha, the protégé of Eliyahu Ha'Navi (Melachim 2 chap. 6).

When the King of Aram learned that Elisha was in the town of Dotan in northern Shomron, he sent a large military force to surround the town with orders to capture Elisha.

The force arrived there at night and waited. In the early morning, Gaichazi, the student of Elisha, went outside and saw that the enemy had completely besieged the town. In desperation, he called out to Elisha, who calmed the young man

